

The Michigan EXPLORE-PLAN Pilot Project

All Michigan Public Schools and Public School Academies are invited to participate in a Michigan EXPLORE-PLAN Pilot Project for spring 2012 and 2013. The project will offer, at no cost to Michigan public schools and public school academies, the EXPLORE assessment to all 8th grade students and the PLAN assessment to all 10th grade students.

Details and information about how to participate in the 2012 project:

Eligible Schools and Grade Levels

All public schools and public school academies with students enrolled in grades 8 or 10 are eligible to participate. Participation is limited to grade 8 students for EXPLORE and grade 10 for PLAN.

Testing Window

The participation window for the project is January 1, 2012 through April 13, 2012. Schools that have already tested eligible students (on or after January 1, 2012) can participate even if the answer documents have already been submitted to ACT for scoring. All Districts must complete a District Participation Agreement by February 10, 2012 (see below).

Ordering Materials

Test materials may be ordered through ACT's National EXPLORE and PLAN website at www.act.org/education/order.

You are strongly encouraged to have your district place a **district** order that identifies each individual school. This will allow the district to automatically receive aggregate reports that include data for each school in the district.

Schools or districts that have already ordered materials and/or received materials may use those materials and do not have to reorder.

Schools or districts that have not yet ordered should have the district place the order after receiving confirmation from BAA that they are approved for testing. First a District Participation Agreement must be submitted – see section below for more details.

Schools or districts that have never ordered or administered EXPLORE or PLAN, or who need help in ordering may contact ACT Customer Services for assistance at 1-877-789-2925 or CustomerServices@act.org.

District Participation Agreement

All schools must complete a participation agreement that identifies which schools will participate in the pilot. The District Participation Agreement is available online at www.michigan.gov/baa, then click on EXPLORE-PLAN Pilot Project.

This agreement must be signed by your district superintendent or authorized designee and returned to the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability (BAA)

via email to BAA@michigan.gov, or FAX to 517-335-1186, **no later than February 10, 2012.**

BAA and ACT will not fund testing for schools or districts that submit a District Participation Agreement after February 10, 2012 and those districts and schools will be responsible for the cost of administering EXPLORE and PLAN. Once the participation agreement has been received, the district and school will be advised via email of their inclusion in the project, and will receive additional information about materials ordering and billing procedures.

Districts that are not able to submit a participation agreement by February 10, 2012, will still have an opportunity to participate in this pilot for spring 2013.

Returning Materials for Scoring

The deadline to return materials for scoring is Friday April 20, 2012. ACT recommends shipping by April 16, 2012. **Materials received at ACT after April 20, 2012**, will not be included in the project, and all scoring costs will be the responsibility of the district and school. DON'T DELAY. Return your materials early.

Receiving Test Results

You can expect your test results from ACT under their regular schedule: Results for schools are usually shipped 10 business days after the answer documents are received at ACT. Results for Districts are usually shipped 20 business days after the District reports are first generated.

How MDE will cover the cost of scoring and reporting

Districts and Schools will receive standard invoices from ACT for EXPLORE and PLAN.

Districts or schools approved by BAA for inclusion in the **Michigan EXPLORE-PLAN Pilot Project** will be instructed not to pay these invoices for students enrolled in grade 8 that participated in EXPLORE and students enrolled in grade 10 that participated in PLAN, pending information from ACT that will outline any credit that will be applied to their account.

Districts or schools receiving invoices from ACT for services other than Grade 8 EXPLORE or Grade 10 PLAN are responsible to pay those invoice amounts when received.

BAA will not reimburse schools or districts that tested Grade 8 EXPLORE or Grade 10 PLAN before January 1, 2012, as this is outside the pilot test window. Schools or districts that tested in 2011 are welcome to test again under the pilot.

More information about invoicing will be provided at a later date.

Checklist of Critical Dates and Frequently Asked Questions

A Checklist of Critical Dates document is available online at www.michigan.gov/baa, then click on EXPLORE-PLAN Pilot Project. A list of Frequently Asked Questions will be posted at the same web address by January 18, 2012.

In Closing:

The Michigan Department of Education, Bureau of Assessment and Accountability is pleased to offer this pilot project to Michigan public schools and public school academies in the hope that participants will find the data both informative and useful in pursuit of school improvement efforts for Michigan students.

For assistance in ordering materials, administering EXPLORE or PLAN, or other questions about these assessments, please contact ACT Customer Services at 1-877-789-2925 or CustomerServices@act.org.

If you have questions or comments related to the **Michigan EXPLORE-PLAN Pilot Project**, please email BAA@michigan.gov or call 1-877-560-8378, select option 7.

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